775 jealous persons or criminals, were thought to become revengeful demons (kodukäija), the term being a translation of the German Heimgänger. [153] These demons were said to be the cause of sickness and other trouble. Nightmares and plagues were believed to be caused by spirits [177] or by the dead, and death appeared under Chris- [96] tian-German influence personified as a man with a scythe, or who was called Liiva Annus 'Sand Annus.'

• 754 538 According to the prominent Estonian folklorist, Dr. Oskar Loorits, the least original mythological figure in Estonia is the sorcerer or magician (Estonian nõid, Finnish noita), who can be either man or woman. The ancient nõid was a wise man (tark), a kind of priest and mediator between the spirits, the dead, and the living. He gave good advice to those in trouble and healed

1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

754 538 sicknesses. Later on, during the long-time slavery under German barons, the nõid became a demon who could bring trouble to the more fortunate people and good fortune to the poor; he could fly through the air or turn into a were-wolf. Such fortune-bringing man-made demons have been very popular in Estonian folklore.

538 [177] 776 Tales of giants (hiid) originated in the last phase of the Iron Age, the Viking era, when contacts with the Scandinavians were close. Scandinavian influence in tales of giants has been traced also in northern Russia.

The folk tales of Saaremaa tell of a giant Suur-Toll 'Big Toll' his wife Piret, and their son Noor-Tõll 'Young Tõll.'

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, K. Ganader's Mythologia fennica appeared in German translation and helped to create a

527 The Vepsians have also several customs pertaining to the celebration of calendar festivals. On New Year's Day, for instance, they perform various magical actions. They dip splinters into a hole in the ice, light them, and predict, from the way the splinters burn, events of the coming year. They also take a pot of rich porridge into the kiln, bow to each corner, ask the spirits to come and eat the porridge and to help them during the harvesting period the next fall. In the evening they go to kulikoil, that is, to make fun in disguise in village houses. The jokers must be let in, even if the family is sleeping when they arrive, and they are shown respect which is almost mingled with fear.

771 Recent descriptions of the Vepsians show how strongly their everyday life is even today permeated with the darkest superstitions. When Kettunen in 1917-18 undertook to open their eyes, he had no success at all. Instead, some of them began even to consider him some kind of magician.

754 The Vepsians believe that sicknesses are not dependent upon the human organism but are caused by evil powers outside the body. They are convinced that only magic and witchcraft can cope with these evil forces. If someone falls sick after bathing, they go into the bathhouse, taking bread, salt and other offerings there, and read a charm to the spirit of the bathhouse. If the sickness is caused by the forest, then they try to reconcile the forest spirit with sacrifices. Often they resort to the help of a witch, who is usually in every village.

754 A cure can be effected only if it is accompanied by the reading of incantations.

Sometimes the magical tricks used in healing may have undesirable effects, such as the methods used by an old woman for curing a man's rheum. She read an incantation over the water, spat into it, waving at the same time the shears in her hand, and then threw the cold water on his naked back.

754
789 The Vepsians believe that not only supernatural spirits but also people can cause sickness and other mishaps by their "evil eyes." To protect themselves they have several magic rites to abolish the bad effects of these people. Thus, before going hunting, they smoke their guns in the fire to rid them of any kind of witch's spell. During the wedding ceremonies they shoot guns in the house to ward off the effects of evil spirits and evil people. The Vepsians consider the gypsies to be powerful magicians who must not be made angry. Since the gypsies are aware of this supposed power, they do not fail to profit by it. Kettunen tells of the arrival of cartful after cartful of gypsies at a South Vepse village during the wartime famine in 1917-18 and how they were treated in the best possible way by the villagers.

517 The Vepsians are gregarious and join together either for work or for pleasant pastimes. These gatherings are especially common in winter when everyone has much free time on his hands. On such occasions they sing, tell

775 Monday evening during the "souls' time."

The dead live in the other world or among the people. Life after death is believed to be the continuation of the earthly life. On Christmas night or on Saturday nights they have services in the lighted church. If their tranquillity is distrubed, they do everything to have their peace restored again. The sorcerers, unbaptised children and children killed by their mothers, haunt the living. Those who commit suicide, who are murdered or who otherwise die an untimely death, are said to wander around until their hour of death arrives as set by God. From the unnatural dead have been developed the "cold-shoe," the universal phantom of the Livonians, spooks and nightmares.

754 The belief in magic is important in the Livonian pagan religion. The names of the sorcerer (bur'a and skun'shtnika) have been taken over from the Latvians. One can recognize a sorcerer by his constant spitting and by his unmatched socks. The sorcerers can spoil the entire life of their fellowmen by sending them sickness and misery. On the other hand, they can also do wonders: make the thieves sick and cause them to lose their way. The sorcerers have a secret book, called the Seventh Book of Moses, of which one copy is kept in a church wall in Riga. Often the sorcerers have close connections with the devil. The favorite times for their activity are the nights before

754 great holidays or weddings. The fact that they can change their form has caused the rise of mythological explanations of whirlwinds and nightmares, and the belief in werewolves, all of which are popular among the Livonians.

Besides the evil sorcerers, there are also good ones in the Livonian mythology. The latter were originally mediators between human beings and the spirits; they were the priests and wise healers, in a word, the great benefactors and helpers of the people. Due to the persecution of the sorcerers by the Christian religion, several of the good qualities of the sorcerers have been dimmed, and only their functions as soothsayers and healers have been preserved up to the present time. There are certain sicknesses for which there is no other cure except the sorcerer's spell. Loorits states that the sorcerers possess a power in the hearts of the people which is much stronger than that of the whole church and the pastors put together.

782 According to the chronicle of Henricus de Lettis, the Livonians in the thirteenth century practiced the sacrifice of human beings and animals. In the course of the centuries, these sacrifices have disappeared. An evidence of the early animal sacrifices can be seen in the custom of killing certain animals at burials. More vital are, however, all kinds of material offerings which are brought, or were brought in the recent past, to various spirits. When

11: Scheffer O-4,5 (ca. 1660) 1704

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the Ignorance and Careleſneſs of the Country Clergy; but ſince by the Care of the *Swediſh* Kings, a Yearly Synod has been Convocated at *Rival*, for the regulation of Church-Affairs, and Examination of the Clergy-Men; it has been found by experience, that beſides their unfitneſs for Devotion, by reaſon of the conſtant Fatigues they are forced to undergo, their antient Idolatry and Superſtition, has taken ſo deep root among them, as not to be quite extirpated by the Art of Man; for ſuch is their Inclination for Sorcery, that they are of Opinion their Cattel cannot thrive without it; for which reaſon, Fathers and Mothers among theſe Peaſants, are as careful to inſtruct their Children in it, as we do in the Cathechiſm and other good Morals. To elude the Effects of Charms, they never kill a Beaſt, or make a Slaughter, but they throw ſome part away, upon which the effect of the Charm is to fall; nay, they are ſo far entangled in Superſtition, that if within a few Weeks after Baptiſm, the Child happen to fall ill, or pine away, they Rebaptize it, alledging, that the firſt Name was not agreable to its Conſtitution, tho' very ſevere Laws have been enacted againſt it. The worſt of all is, that they are ſo Tenacious of theſe Superſtitions, and ſo obſtinate in the perſeverance of their antient Cuſtoms, that nothing is able to divert them from it. Of this there have been ſeveral Inſtances of late Years; for theſe Peaſants, as I told you before, being not permitted to purchaſe any Lands, but obliged to live upon the Allotments granted to them by their Lords, for the bare ſuſtenance of their Families, will ſometimes cut or burn down ſome Woods, and Manure the Ground, which produces good Wheat; this they hide for Sale; but if they happen to be catch'd, they are ſtrip'd to the middle, and ty'd to a Poſt, where they are ſoundly whipt with a Switch, till the Blood iſſues forth on all Sides; I ſay, there are many Inſtances of ſuch among the *Livonian* Peaſants, who rather than redeem this Chaſtiſement by a ſmall pecuniary Mulct of about 18 or 16 Pence, have choſen to ſubmit readily to the Puniſhment, alledging, that rather than introduce any Novelty of this Kind, they would ſuffer the ſame Chaſtiſement their Fore-fathers uſed to do before them.

CHAP.